DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 464 749 PS 030 373

AUTHOR Haack, Peggy

TITLE Creating Better School-Age Care Jobs: Model Work Standards.

INSTITUTION Center for the Child Care Workforce, Washington, DC.

SPONS AGENCY Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, MI.; Ms. Foundation for Women, Inc., New York, NY.

ISBN ISBN-1-889956-22-8

PUB DATE 2001-00-00

NOTE 44p.; Additional funding was provided by the North Shore Unitarian Universalist Veatch Programs.

AVAILABLE FROM Center for the Child Care Workforce, 733 15th Street, NW, Suite 1037, Washington, DC 20005-2112. Tel: 800-UR-WORTHY (Toll Free); Tel: 202-737-7700; Fax: 202-737-0370; e-mail: MWS@ccw.org. For full text: http://www.ccw.org/pubs/MWS-schoolage.pdf.

PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS *Child Caregivers; Day Care; Elementary Education; *Occupational Information; Personnel Management; *School Age Day Care; *Standards; *Work Environment

ABSTRACT

Built on the premise that good school-age care jobs are the cornerstone of high-quality services for school-age youth and their families, this guide presents model work standards for school-age care providers. The guide begins with a description of the strengths and challenges of the school-age care profession. The model work standards are designed to be used to assist in articulating what school-age care providers need to have a high-quality work environment, to evaluate how a particular program measures up to providing a high-quality workplace, to assist in setting goals to improve job conditions and measure effectiveness, and to provide information for enlisting the wider community in advocating for the resources youth programs need to succeed. The model work standards are then presented, organized in 13 categories: (1) wages; (2) benefits; (3) job descriptions and evaluations; (4) hiring and promotions; (5) termination, suspension, severance, and grievance procedures; (6) program assignments, work hours, and planning time; (7) communication, team building, and staff meetings; (8) decision making and problem solving; (9) professional development; (10) professional support; (11) diversity; (12) health and safety; and (13) physical setting. Some standards indicate two possible levels of quality, a high-quality level and a striving level. Standards essential to a good adult work environment are designated. The guide's appendices include information for school-age program staff, directors, parents, boards of directors, and schools regarding the use of the model work standards; an explanation of the essential model work standards; procedures for calculating a self-sufficiency wage depending on the community; measures of program quality; and an action plan worksheet. (KB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original document.

ED 464 749

Creating Better School-Age Care Jobs:

Model Work Standards

Center for the Child Care Workforce
Washington, D.C.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Marc Young

2A

PS 030373

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Copyright © 2001
Center for the Child Care Workforce (CCW)
All rights reserved.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Creating Better School-Age Care Jobs: Model Work Standards was made possible by the generous support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Ms. Foundation for Women, and the North Shore Unitarian Universalist Veatch Programs.

We would like to thank the hundreds of child care providers from all over the country, representing all sectors of the workforce and caring for all ages of children and youth, who contributed their ideas to model work standards through the "Good Child Care Jobs=Good Care for Children" postcard campaign, and subsequently through training sessions, meetings, and other gatherings. Special thanks to Linda Sisson, Kristina Young, and members of the Accreditation Advisory Council of the National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA); Jeanette Paulson, Paula Bernhagen, Linda Eisele, and Stacy Randall of the Wisconsin School-Age Care Alliance (WISACA);-Joyce Shortt and Brooke Harvey of the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST); Sarah Mello Temple of the School's Out Consortium in Seattle, WA; and Becky Landrum, a School-Age Coordinator in Charlotte, NC for reviewing this document and giving valuable feedback.

We also acknowledge the contributions of CCW staff: Peggy Haack, Resources and Training Coordinator, who compiled the information and is the primary author; and Rosemarie Vardell and Bobbie Westmoreland who served as reviewers and editors, and helped make production of this publication possible.

We welcome your feedback on this document for future editions.

Printed in the U.S.A. by Harris Lithographics, Inc.
Book Layout: Free Range Graphics

ISBN 1-889956-22-8

Center for the Child Care Workforce
733 15th St., N.W., Suite 1037
Washington, DC 20005-2112
Tel.: (202) 737-7700 • (800) UR-WORTHY
Fax: (202) 737-0370
E-mail: MWS@ccw.org
Web site: http://www.ccw.org

The Center for the Child Care Workforce

The Center for the Child Care Workforce (CCW) was founded in 1978 as the Child Care Employee Project. CCW is a nonprofit research, education and advocacy organization committed to improving child care jobs–upgrading compensation, working conditions and training of child care teachers, family child care providers, and school-age care staff –and therefore enhancing the quality of child care services.

Regardless of what we call ourselves–child care workers, family child care providers, school-age or preschool or early childhood teachers, teacher assistants, group leaders, youth workers or caregivers–we work in a field where most people are undervalued and underpaid. The Worthy Wage Campaign, founded in 1991, brought us together to strengthen our voices, foster respect for our work, and educate the child care field and the general public about the crisis of low wages and high turnover in our profession. The effects of poor compensation and staff instability on adults and children, and what to do about them, have become the hottest topics in the child care debate. That is why, in the year 2000, we relaunched the Worthy Wage Campaign as the Worthy Wage Network.

The Worthy Wage Network is a broad-based, easy-to-join mobilization of staff in all kinds of child care programs serving the diverse needs of children of all ages, as well as program administrators, family child care providers, parents, staff of support agencies, community leaders, and allies of all kinds. The Network is calling for a major investment of public funds that is directly targeted to improving child care jobs.

The Network links a growing number of worthy wage supporters and activists. *Rights. Raises. Respect* is a free monthly online newsletter available to Worthy Wage Network members. The newsletter features CCW activities, legislative updates, action alerts, and other information pertinent to the child care workforce. CCW is also working to make our web site a premiere source of information on child care workforce issues. At *www.ccw.org*, visitors can order publications, download articles, participate in webcasts, and join in online discussion forums.

To join the Network, simply visit our web site to fill out an online form, send an email to *network@ccw.org* with your name, address, phone number and any other pertinent information, or call us. You'll be joining the growing movement to guarantee the child care profession the compensation, recognition, and respect it deserves.

Table of Contents

Page

4 **Preamble**

5 **Introduction**

11 **Model Work Standards**

1. Wages
2. Benefits
3. Job Descriptions and Evaluations
4. Hiring and Promotions
5. Termination, Suspension, Severance and Grievance Procedures
6. Classroom Assignments, Hours of Work & Planning Time
7. Communication, Team Building & Staff Meetings
8. Decision Making & Problem Solving
9. Professional Development
10. Professional Support
11. Diversity
12. Health & Safety
13. Physical Setting

33 **Appendices**

Using the Model Work Standards: A Note for School-Age Program Staff
Using the Model Work Standards: A Note for Directors/Administrators
Using the Model Work Standards: A Note for Parents and Boards of Directors
Using the Model Work Standards: A Note for Schools
A Note on the "Essential" Model Work Standards
Calculating a Self-Sufficiency or Living Wage for Your Community
Other Measures of Program Quality
Action Plan Work Sheet

Preamble

These Model Work Standards are built on the premise that good school-age care jobs are the cornerstone of high-quality services for school-age youth and their families. These standards

DECLARE:

- the right of school-age program staff to work under conditions that reflect and reward their skills, knowledge and experience, and
- the necessity for school-age program staff to be involved in determining their working conditions and in making decisions that affect their work lives.

ACKNOWLEDGE:

- the complexity of school-age care jobs which demand education and training, physical and emotional strength, constant vigilance and creativity, intense human interaction every day, and a high level of self-esteem and self-confidence in order to instill the same in youth; and
- the work of school-age care for the valuable role it plays in youth development, workforce development and delinquency prevention.

The intent of these standards is that those who choose careers in school-age care can reasonably and responsibly support themselves and their own families, and that they can feel pride in their choice rather than constantly defending it to others or questioning it themselves. In short, these standards are about:

RIGHTS, RAISES AND RESPECT
FOR THE CHILD CARE WORKFORCE

Introduction

In the mid-1990's, as momentum was building for accreditation as a measure of program quality, the Center for the Child Care Workforce (CCW) stepped up its efforts to help complete the picture of program quality by focusing on quality from the perspective of adult caregivers. We extended an invitation to everyone who cares for and educates children to help us define standards for a high-quality work environment.

We began a dialogue among all sectors of the child care workforce for the purposes of: a) exerting our collective imagination to create and sustain a vision of high-quality care for children of all ages; and, b) exerting our collective power to change the status quo...which is not good enough for the children and families you serve, and isn't good enough for you and your colleagues. Through a nationwide postcard campaign, focus groups, workshops, and other consensus-building activities, we heard from early childhood teachers, program directors, family child care providers, and school-age care providers. Feedback from the field, combined with research findings on best practices, form the basis of these standards.

In 1998 we published *Creating Better Child Care Jobs: Model Work Standards for Center-Based Child Care Teaching Staff*. Along with it's first revision in 1999, we published a companion piece, *Creating Better Family Child Care Jobs: Model Work Standards*. We continue our work of defining good child care jobs, with this third publication, *Creating Better School-Age Care Jobs: Model Work Standards*. It acknowledges that there are unique strengths and challenges you face in your work environment, some of which required adaptations in the original standards for child care centers and modifications in the language used to describe your work.

Good School-Age Care Jobs = Good Care for School-Agers!

Your daily experiences with school-age children undoubtedly validate this equation, and there is ample research to back up the claim that the adult work environment is a critical element of program quality. We know from numerous studies in early childhood programs that low wages and poor working conditions fuel turnover, that turnover is harmful to children and their development, and that the quality of care is tenuous even in accredited programs if turnover is high. Research specific to school-age care is limited. However, in 1993 the U.S. Department of Education published the *National Study of Before and After School Programs*, in which phone interviews were conducted with 1300 nationally representative programs in a wide variety of settings; twelve of these programs were selected for in-depth visits.

Findings from this study include:

- The average turnover rate in programs that experienced some turnover of paid staff in the past 12 months was 60%.
- The overall turnover rate, including programs that had little or no turnover, was 35%, a rate somewhat higher than found in center-based care serving younger children.
- Low pay and minimal employee benefits also characterized the work environment of school-age care employees.

- The staff of these programs were found to work an average of 20-26 hours per week, and more than one-third held second jobs.

This picture has not improved since 1993. In fact, the latter part of the past decade is characterized by an economy that has only exacerbated the child care staffing crisis. A booming economy and low unemployment have resulted in most everyone being able to find a job that pays better than school-age care. As in other sectors of the child care industry, low wages serve as the hidden subsidy of a program's costs and frequently program quality is compromised. At the same time as existing programs struggle to recruit and retain staff, there is a new sense of urgency to expand school-age programming in communities all around the country. Public interest and funding for school-age programs is on the rise, but the labor pool continues to dwindle. Creating better school-age jobs is of vital importance if we are to make lasting, comprehensive improvements in the nation's school-age care system.

Strengths and Challenges of the School-age Care Profession

The NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care identifies the following unique characteristics of school-age care:

- the wide range of ages served from five-year-olds to 14-year olds;
- the shared nature of many aspects of school-age care, including sharing facilities, sharing staff with other jobs and schools, sharing children with schools and other activities, and sharing the calendar with the schools; and,
- the unique combination of skills required to do the work well, including community outreach, child guidance, recreation planning, and group facilitation.

Those who have found their calling working with school-age children have also found an opportunity to bring many of their creative talents to the forefront, and can certainly expect to share in the good times that accompany this unique developmental stage. While the study of school-age care has provided us with the knowledge of what constitutes high-quality programs, there is ample room for staff to design and implement a program that is unique to a given work site. Because many avenues of education can help prepare one for this work, pooling the diversity of talents and interests of school-age providers is a particular strength of the profession, and can be a very rewarding aspect of this work. And while there are drawbacks to the part-time hours for some, for others it may be the perfect fit with other life choices, e.g. going to school or being home with a young child for much of the day.

One of the biggest challenges to the school-age care profession, however, is building a high-quality, stable workforce dedicated to working together to create a good program. The low wages and lack of adequate benefits, characteristic of all forms of child care, are compounded in school-age care by the reliance on part-time workers and by the fact that many programs do not operate year-round. It is typical in many fields of work to pay part-time workers less, offer fewer if any benefits, engage them less often in ongoing decision-making, and expect less in terms of a commitment to the job. But in the school-age care profession, the consequences of such practices may be a well-meaning staff ill-prepared for the realities of the job; staff who are unwilling to invest their emotional selves in a way that school-age children demand; and an overall sacrifice of program quality.

Programs that are intentionally working to improve program quality and reduce turnover, use strategies like these:

- Create as many full time jobs as possible to attract and retain workers while stabilizing their workforce, especially for program directors, site coordinators, and group leaders. Examples of how a program may increase the numbers of full-time jobs include: scheduling staff for both a.m. and p.m. shifts (before and after school), adding administrative tasks to a part-time shift with children to increase hours, reducing the number of hours considered to be "full-time," taking into consideration all the time (including planning and preparation time) actually required of a job that may be full-time but is treated as part-time, or combining part-time jobs in the same program or compatible programs. Especially if a program has a preschool component, providing some work time in this program as support staff or in a "floater" position could create a full-time job.
- Provide full-time staff with the full range of benefits (medical insurance, retirement benefits, paid vacation and holidays, paid sick leave, etc.) *and* pro-rate benefits for all staff, based on full-time work hours.
- Create a work environment that gives staff a sense of community among children, families, and other staff; shared leadership; sensitivity and flexibility around work/family issues; and adequate training and supervision.
- Seek out professional development opportunities that speak specifically to the job of working with school-age children.
- Organize the voices of the workers themselves and engage them in creating strategies to reduce staff turnover. Programs that do not operate all year have a particular need to plan carefully for turnover.

The physical spaces in which school-age programs operate also present some unique challenges. Instead of a classroom, a school-age site may be a converted cafeteria or gymnasium in a school; a space in a community recreational center, public park, playground, or library; or a combination of these spaces with perhaps additional special activity areas like a computer lab or art studio. Often the indoor environment is shared space that must be set up and taken down each day so that other users can occupy the space when the program is not in operation. Clearly, a work environment such as this must offer the staff ample paid time to prepare and clean up, and program resources must be invested to make this a reasonable task (for example, lightweight shelving that is on wheels for ease of movement). Staff in school-age programs should be engaged in designing the most effective and creative use of the space for all concerned–staff as well as children. Even if a program is part of a larger multi-site agency, decisions that affect the day-to-day operation of a program must be made by those who will experience the impact of those decisions most: staff of a particular work site.

MODEL WORK STANDARDS AS A TOOL

These Model Work Standards are designed as a tool to serve several purposes. They are:

- **an educational tool** for articulating what school-age care providers need in order to have a high-quality work environment;
- **an assessment tool** for evaluating how a school-age care program measures up to providing a high-quality workplace;
- **a planning tool** for setting goals to improve job conditions and measuring success; and,

- **an organizing tool** for enlisting the wider community–parents, professional associations, support agencies, schools, business, labor, government, law enforcement and the school-age care profession–in advocating for the resources programs need to recruit and retain a skillful, stable school-age workforce.

The Model Work Standards are divided into 13 categories, ranging from Wages and Benefits to Professional Development, Diversity and the Physical Setting. Some standards–those identified by a check mark in the right-hand column–we consider essential for a school-age program to meet in order to be recognized as providing a good adult work environment. These are standards which either directly impact the quality of care that children receive, as documented by current research, or were repeatedly emphasized by the many people who helped us in developing the standards. Further background information on these essential standards can be found in the Appendices.

Some standards indicate two possible levels of quality, a **High-Quality** level and a **Striving** level. For many school-age care programs, the goal of meeting a standard at the "striving level" will reflect significant progress in improving the work environment.

A program that meets 75% of the standards, including all the essential items, is worthy of recognition for providing a good adult work environment. Where two levels are identified, the essential items must at least be met at the Striving Level.

A program that meets 90% of the standards, including all the essential items, has achieved a model work environment that truly supports the staff in providing their best to school-age children. Where two levels are identified, the essential items must be met at the High-Quality Level.

Implementation

The Model Work Standards describe a high-quality work environment. Your program may have achieved many of the standards, and others may seem within your grasp. But there are likely to be some which are unattainable within the current scope of your program. We hope that you will use these criteria to evaluate your work environment and to set guideposts for improvements. Model Work Standards can identify the gap between the current work environment and what is necessary to support good care for youth. These standards, especially those requiring greater resources, are included not to frustrate you but to remind ourselves and others of our vision of a good school-age care job, our goals for change, and the need for greater investment in the service we provide to our communities.

We recognize that improving a work environment requires an investment of time, energy, and money. Some improvements may only require a minimal financial cost, but a significant investment in changing the interpersonal climate of a workplace. Others may challenge programs to re-prioritize existing resources or find additional funding sources. Still others may call for a community-wide plan to unite forces and take action.

USING THE MODEL WORK STANDARDS IN YOUR SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM.

In the earliest phase of implementation, these standards can serve as a working tool for setting goals to improve your current work environment. We suggest engaging both the program staff and the administration in developing an action plan through a process of shared decision-making. A well-thought-out action plan can then be presented to parents, and in many cases a Board of Directors and/or a host agency (which could be a school or a sponsoring agency in the community), whose

support and involvement become very important. Honoring the diverse perspectives brought to this process will be both a challenge and a strength in achieving success. For staff represented by a union, this process can be used to improve the current collective bargaining agreement. (See the Appendices for "Notes to Program Staff, Directors/Administrators, Parents and Boards of Directors, and Schools.")

As a beginning place, consider developing an agreement about how people in your program want to work together to create a better work environment. What do you need from each other in terms of a working relationship? Put your agreement in writing and use it as a reminder if communication or support breaks down and you need to get back on track. Undoubtedly, your agreement will call for mutual respect among program staff–both group leaders and assistants–administrators, any sponsoring agencies, and parents. It will promote the recognition of school-age care staff as professionals not only in relation to children, but to other adults as well. It will acknowledge the conflicting role of the program director as an advocate for the staff and families, and as the business person responsible for the program's financial stability, perhaps answering to a higher administration. It will note the critical role of parent involvement and support in achieving and maintaining a high-quality program.

As a group you can work through the following steps:

1. ***Assess your current working environment using the Model Work Standards.*** You may choose to do this as a group–preferably the staff and program director of a specific program site together–or ask everyone to assess the program individually, and then come together to identify areas of consensus and disagreement. Look at each standard and determine whether or not all staff agree that your program meets this particular goal. If it does, put a check in the box to the left of the standard. If everyone does not agree that a certain standard has been met, it will be important to work toward understanding why the staff have varying perspectives on this subject.

2. ***Discuss priorities for making improvement.*** For those standards which the program does not consistently meet, determine which are of higher and lower priority, using a process similar to that in step #1, and checking the appropriate column to the left of the standard. While reaching consensus on level of priority is desirable, it is less important than agreeing whether a standard is consistently met.

3. ***Determine the cost for each of your top priorities.*** It is important to place a dollar amount on the various goals you have set. Some programs decide how much money they can allocate or will raise to make changes (e.g., $5,000 for the coming year) and then select their top priority.

4. ***Make an action plan.*** Ask each staff person to identify, among their high priorities, one to three standards which they want to achieve first. Then, rank the top one to three priorities that are agreed upon by all staff members. Taking your top priority, use the Action Plan Work Sheet provided in the Appendices to develop your plan. (Copy the work sheet for each standard you address.) You may want to start with a standard that you believe will be fairly achievable but meaningful to the staff, for example, increasing your number of paid sick days. Your plan should also include a time line, notes on what kinds of support and resources you will need to accomplish your

goal, and information on who will be responsible for certain tasks.

5. ***Document your progress.*** This will help you evaluate, learn from, and adapt strategies to sustain continued efforts.
6. ***Celebrate and broadcast your accomplishments.*** Every victory, no matter how large or small, moves you closer to your goal of achieving good school-age care jobs.

USING MODEL WORK STANDARDS IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Model Work Standards can provide community-wide recognition of programs that offer a high-quality work environment for staff in school-age care programs. In turn, program administrators will be able to better recruit and retain their work force, and parents will have another important way to gauge program quality. We therefore recommend using these standards with the broader community (business, labor, women's groups, public policy and funding organizations; child care resource and referral agencies; educational institutions; youth and child care advocacy groups; professional associations; support groups, etc.) so that together you can:

- support programs that are engaged in improving jobs,
- promote careers in school-age care that recognize the value of a quality work environment,
- inform all professionals–those just entering the field, as well as seasoned professionals–that these standards exist and that they can be useful in making decisions about future professional growth,
- showcase model work sites, and
- educate consumers about quality youth programs.

If there are others in your community who are working to improve jobs using these Model Work Standards, join them. Together a coalition of program staff, directors and administrators, parents and community members can support and learn from each other, and strategize on how to address some of the most difficult issues, such as affordable health care coverage. As a further resource, see also the Center for the Child Care Workforce's publication, *Making Work Pay in the Child Care Industry: Promising Practices for Improving Compensation*, and *Working for Quality Child Care*. Information on these and other resources is available through CCW's web site: *www.ccw.org*.

Let us know...

We want to hear how you have successfully used the Model Work Standards so that we can share your successes with others. We also welcome your feedback on this document so that we can improve it for future editions.

Remember...

Something is better than nothing.
More is better than less.
Sooner is better that later.

DON'T HESITATE....GET STARTED TODAY.

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 1: WAGES**	ESSENTIAL
			1.1 Salary scales for all positions are published and readily available to all employees.	✓
			1.2 Salary scales range from a locally-determined "self-sufficiency wage" or "living wage" to annualized public school teacher salaries (calculated as hourly wages) for the highest-paid, most qualified school-age care staff positions. This is the targeted level for high-quality school-age care work environments (See Appendix, p.37, for more information about the terms "self-sufficiency wage" and "living wage.")	
			1.3 Salary scales identify different levels of pay for different levels of education, responsibility, and tenure.	✓
			1.4 High-quality Level: Until salaries reach target levels, staff minimally receive an annual 5% raise in wages, in addition to a cost-of-living increase.	✓
			Striving Level: Staff receive cost-of-living increases annually.	
			1.5 Until salaries reach target levels, salary scales are reviewed annually and revised when additional funds become available from parent fee increases, reimbursement or other subsidy rate increases, or other sources.	✓
			1.6 Wages are paid in full when the program has an unexpected closure, e.g. inclement weather days.	

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 1: WAGES**	ESSENTIAL
			1.7 All work–both the direct involvement with youth, and work that supports services to youth (e.g. staff meetings, planning time, parent conferences, extra responsibilities, community outreach, etc.)–is paid at no less than the regular rate of pay.	
			1.8 Any staff member who is qualified to perform a higher-paying job, and temporarily performs it, is paid at the higher rate of pay for all hours worked on that job.	
			1.9 As required by federal law, all work by school-age care staff that is over 40 hours per week is paid at the overtime rate of time and a half.	✓
			1.10 In programs where staff work both before- and after-school shifts, a split-shift differential of one hour's pay is awarded. For example, a staff person working a total of 5 contact hours with children in both the morning and afternoon, plus 2 hours of preparation and planning time, would earn wages for an 8-hour day.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 10.

NOTES ON WAGES:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 2: BENEFITS**	ESSENTIAL
			2.1 High-quality Level: Full-time employees receive 100% employer-paid health insurance, including prescription coverage. Health insurance for part-time employees is pro-rated.	✓
			Striving Level: Full-time employees receive 75% employer-paid health insurance. Health insurance for part-time employees is pro-rated.	
			2.2 High-quality Level: A negotiable package equivalent to 10% of salary is available for child care, family member health coverage, short and long term disability insurance, dental insurance, optical insurance, or life insurance.	
			Striving Level: A negotiable package equivalent to 5% of salary is available for child care, family member health coverage, short and long term disability insurance, dental insurance, optical insurance, or life insurance.	
			2.3 High-quality Level: A pension plan is available with an employer contribution, equal to 5% of salary and including an option for employee contributions.	
			Striving Level: A pension plan is available with an employer contribution, equal to 2% of salary and including an option for employee contributions.	
			2.4 High-quality Level: Staff receive paid sick/personal days with the number based on the percentage of the year for which they are employed: full-year employees earn 15 days/year, school-year-only employees earn 11 days/year, and summer-only employees earn 3 days/year. These days can be taken to care for sick family members as well.	✓
			Striving Level: Staff receive paid sick/personal days with the number based on the percentage of the year for which they are employed. Full-year employees earn 12 days/year, school-year-only employees earn 8 days/year, and summer-only employees earn 2 days/year.	
			2.5 One year's worth of unused sick days can be carried over to the following year.	

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 2: BENEFITS**	ESSENTIAL
			2.6 High-quality Level: A minimum of 11 holidays are paid each year if the program operates for a full calendar year. Staff and employer together determine days closed for holidays. When holidays fall on a weekend, the day before or after is the paid holiday. If the program does not operate year-round, only those holidays observed during the time of operation apply. When holidays fall on a weekend, the day before or after is the paid holiday.	✓
			Striving Level: A minimum of 8 holidays are paid each year if the program operates for a full calendar year. Staff and employer together determine days closed for holidays. If the program does not operate year-round, only those holidays observed during the time of operation apply. When holidays fall on a weekend, the day before or after is the paid holiday.	
			2.7 Employees may use personal or vacation time for religious or cultural holidays for which the center is not closed.	
			2.8 High-quality Level: During the first year of employment, full-time full-year employees accrue vacation time of at least 10 days per year.	✓
			Striving Level: During the first year of employment, full-time full-year employees accrue vacation time of at least 5 days per year.	
			2.9 High-quality Level: During years two through four, full-time full-year employees accrue vacation time of at least 15 days per year.	✓
			Striving Level: During years two through four, full-time full-year employees accrue vacation time of at least 10 days per year	
			2.10 High-quality Level: After five years, full-time full year employees accrue vacation time at the rate of 20 days per year.	✓
			Striving Level: After five years, full-time full-year employees accrue vacation at the rate of 15 days per year.	

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 2: BENEFITS**	ESSENTIAL
			2.11 Part-time and part-year employees earn vacation on a pro-rated basis. Because school-age programs may operate on the school calendar, programs have the discretion of offering vacations days during agency "down time," e.g. paid vacation for the winter break if the agency is closed, or establishing pre-determined vacation days as part of the employment agreement.	✓
			2.12 High-quality Level: Up to 10 days of vacation time may be carried over into the following year.	
			Striving Level: Up to 5 days of vacation time may be carried over into the following year.	
			2.13 There are written policies describing the conditions under which an unpaid leave of absence may be taken by employees.	
			2.14 High-quality Level: Up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave is allowed each year for the birth or adoption of a child, acceptance of a foster child, or employee or family member illness. The employee is guaranteed continued health coverage and his/her job back at the same rate of pay and benefits as prior to the leave.	
			Striving Level: Up to 8 weeks of unpaid leave is allowed each year for the reasons given above. Provisions to stay on the current health care plan and to be re-assigned to a job with the same rate of pay and benefits as prior to the leave are guaranteed.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 14.

NOTES ON BENEFITS:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 3: JOB DESCRIPTIONS & EVALUATIONS**	ESSENTIAL
			3.1 Staff members are provided a copy of their written job description, and evaluation procedures and instruments before beginning employment.	✓
			3.2 Job descriptions are accurate and specific.	
			3.3 Job descriptions are reviewed regularly and program staff have input on any revisions.	
			3.4 Job descriptions include minimum qualifications for the position.	
			3.5 Staff are evaluated three months after the date of hire, or at the end of a probationary/orientation period if less than six months, and then at least annually thereafter.	
			3.6 The evaluation process includes: 1) a self-evaluation completed by the employee, 2) a written evaluation by the supervisor, 3) a peer or team evaluation, and 4) a meeting between the employee and the supervisor to discuss the evaluation.	✓
			3.7 A procedure is in place for employee evaluation of supervisors.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 7.

NOTES ON JOB DESCRIPTIONS & EVALUATIONS:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 4: HIRING & PROMOTIONS**	ESSENTIAL
			4.1 Current employees are informed of any job opening at least five working days before outside advertising begins.	
			4.2 Policies focus on developing current employees for promotions and leadership positions.	✓
			4.3 In hiring for staff positions, the interviewing/decision-making committee shall include at least one staff member who currently works with children at the program site where the vacancy occurs, and an additional person who has experience (at least one year) and training specific to school-age care.	
			4.4 In hiring for supervisory or management positions, the interviewing/decision-making committee shall include at least one program staff member who works with school-agers, preferably who has worked one program year or more and has received training specific to school-age care.	
			4.5 Orientation is provided before a new employee assumes responsibilities of the job. The orientation includes a review of program policies and procedures, as well as the employee's legal rights in the workplace.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 5.

NOTES ON HIRING & PROMOTIONS:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 5: TERMINATION, SUSPENSION, SEVERANCE & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**	ESSENTIAL
			5.1 Employees are not discharged without just cause.	✓
			5.2 No discharge for unsatisfactory job performance takes place until the employee has been warned of unsatisfactory performance in writing and has been given reasonable time to improve (except under circumstances as described in standard 5.3 below). Written notice of discharge, stating reasons for dismissal, is given to the employee.	✓
			5.3 Grounds for immediate dismissal, with no prior notice, include: the display of physical violence harmful to children or adults or property, a guilty verdict or substantiated state investigation of child abuse or neglect, evidence of alcohol and/or other drug abuse, misuse of funds, falsification of documents, and violation of confidentiality requirements.	
			5.4 A staff person under investigation for alleged child abuse and/or neglect is transferred to responsibilities that do not involve direct contact with children, or is placed on a paid leave of absence without loss of benefits, until such time as: 1) an investigation is completed by the appropriate agency, or 2) the completion of a trial in a court of law. A positive finding in an investigation or a guilty verdict in a court of law is grounds for immediate dismissal.	
			5.5 High-quality Level: In the case of a layoff, employees receive a minimum of two-week notice, followed by severance pay equal to one week of pay for every 12 months of employment, up to four weeks.	
			Striving Level: In the case of a layoff, employees receive a minimum of a two-week notice and full payment of wages for those two weeks, whether working or not.	
			5.6 Grievance procedures are in writing and are available to all employees.	✓

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 5: TERMINATION, SUSPENSION, SEVERANCE & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**	ESSENTIAL
			5.7 Grievance procedures state who can or must initiate a complaint, how it must be initiated, who receives the complaint, when the complaint must be filed, and how the complaint will be resolved.	
			5.8 Employees have the right to have another person present at any point in the grievance process.	
			5.9 No retaliatory action is taken against staff who implement the grievance procedure.	
			5.10 As required by federal law, no retaliatory action is taken against staff who join a union for the purpose of collective bargaining as a strategy to improve school-age care jobs.	✓

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 10.

NOTES ON TERMINATION, SUSPENSION, SEVERANCE & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 6: PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS, HOURS OF WORK & PLANNING TIME**	ESSENTIAL
			6.1 Staff work schedules and program assignments are set at the time of hire.	
			6.2 Program assignments are stable and are not changed in response to daily fluctuations in child enrollments. No arbitrary or capricious changes occur.	✓
			6.3 When work schedules must be changed temporarily, staff input is considered.	✓
			6.4 When work schedules must be changed permanently, a minimum of a two-week notice is given.	✓
			6.5 The child care needs of the school-age staff are considered when determining work assignments.	
			6.6 One paid 15-minute break is awarded for each continuous 4-hour period worked. Consistent and qualified substitutes or floater staff are available for coverage during these scheduled periods of non-responsibility for children.	
			6.7 High-quality Level: School-age staff with planning responsibilities who work directly with youth 15 to 20 hours/week receive 5 hours/week of paid planning time. Staff with planning and supervisory responsibilities who work directly with youth over 20 hours/week receive 10 hours of paid planning time per week. This time may be used for: observation, curriculum planning, committee and/or board meetings, coordination with schools and other agencies, parent communication, gathering and preparing materials, reflection on classroom practices, assessment of children's growth and development, and community outreach. This time does not include regularly scheduled staff meetings or time in the work schedule allotted for set-up and clean-up.	
			Striving Level: School-age staff with planning responsibilities who work directly with youth 15 to 20 hours/week or more receive 2.5 hours of paid planning time per week; those who work more than 20 hours receive 5 hours/week. This time may be used for the activities identified above. This time does not include regularly scheduled staff meetings or time in the work schedule allotted for set-up and clean-up.	

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 6: PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS, HOURS OF WORK & PLANNING TIME**	ESSENTIAL
			6.8 School-age care staff are not responsible for children during their planning time, as reflected in the program's staffing pattern or the employment of qualified substitutes or floaters.	
			6.9 High-quality Level: If the program operates year-round, it is closed at least 6 days (3 days two times per year) for all staff to participate in long-range program planning, prepare the physical environment, and receive program orientation. If a program operates for the school year only or the summer only, the program is closed for 3 days for the same purposes. Staff members are paid at their regular rate of pay for their participation.	
			Striving Level: If the program operates year-round, it is closed at least 4 days (2 days two times per year) for all staff to participate in long-range program planning, prepare the physical environment and receive program orientation. If a program operates for the school year only or the summer only, the program is closed for 2 days for the same purposes. Staff members are paid at their regular rate of pay for their participation.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 9.

NOTES ON PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS, HOURS OF WORK & PLANNING TIME:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 7: COMMUNICATION, TEAM BUILDING & STAFF MEETINGS**	ESSENTIAL
			7.1 Communication between and among youth workers, group leaders, supervisory staff, administration and/or host agencies models respect for the valuable work of school-age care.	✓
			7.2 An effective communication system ensures that everyone on staff is informed about new procedures, policies, and events. Such a communication system respects the various learning styles of staff; it incorporates both visual and verbal messages, and, as appropriate, a "walk through" process for new procedures.	✓
			7.3 Written policies and procedures for the program are provided to employees at the time of hire. Policies and procedures include, but are not limited to: job descriptions; personnel policies; salary/benefit schedules; staff disciplinary policies; program policies; expectation for staff involvement in parent meetings, conferences, fundraising events and other activities; health policies for both youth and staff; and, a calendar for the program year identifying program closure days.	✓
			7.4 Proposed changes in policies and procedures that impact a given school-age program site are circulated in writing to all staff, and a sufficient period is designated for meaningful staff input and response before changes are adopted or implemented.	✓
			7.5 Paid staff meetings, which engage all staff of a particular site, are held at least once per month. Staff meetings are primarily for improving program quality, enhancing staff communication, and promoting professional development of staff. Staff meetings may also be used for announcements, reminders and general issues of efficient program operation. Additionally, staff participating in agency-wide staff meetings are compensated for their time.	✓
			7.6 Staff have input into the agenda of staff meetings, the agenda is distributed in advance of meetings, and a written record of the meeting is kept and posted.	

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 7: COMMUNICATION, TEAM BUILDING & STAFF MEETINGS**	ESSENTIAL
			7.7 Opportunities exist for program staff to work collaboratively on projects, to share resources, and to solve problems together.	
			7.8 Activities are planned and traditions are kept that create a sense of community among the staff.	
			7.9 Orientation and welcoming of new staff incorporate the expertise of current staff.	
			7.10 Opportunities exist for staff to observe one another and work together to improve practices and expand the repertoire of skills employed in school-age care.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 10.

NOTES ON COMMUNICATION, TEAM BUILDING & STAFF MEETINGS:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 8: DECISION-MAKING & PROBLEM-SOLVING**	ESSENTIAL
			8.1 Program staff make decisions regarding daily activities, room arrangements, and other matters that affect their day-to-day practice.	✓
			8.2 Program staff share decision-making with the administration in situations where decisions impact their work lives. These decisions include, but are not limited to: staffing for paid leave time, scheduling, rotation of responsibilities, ordering materials for the classroom, screening and interviewing new staff, and managing staff turnover with consideration for the needs of children and staff.	
			8.3 Program staff are engaged in setting program goals for their work site, identifying priorities to meet their goals, and measuring progress.	✓
			8.4 The program philosophy and a vision for the future are shared by staff and reviewed at least annually.	✓
			8.5 There is a commitment on the part of everyone to look at what's not working, along with an openness to and support for trying new ideas.	
			8.6 Problems are viewed as opportunities for program improvement.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 6.

NOTES ON DECISION-MAKING & PROBLEM SOLVING:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 9: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**	ESSENTIAL
			9.1 Staff receive open, honest and regular feedback based on routine observation.	✓
			9.2 Staff receive clear expectations about job performance and regular supervision to enhance job performance.	
			9.3 Staff are guided in setting challenging but reachable goals, resources are provided to assist in reaching goals.	
			9.4 Supervision is individualized to meet each person's needs.	
			9.5 Confidentiality of all information regarding employees is maintained.	✓
			9.6 Staff development and training plans are determined through a mutual evaluation process between the staff member and the supervisor. Training choices reflect the learning styles and interests of individual staff members.	✓
			9.7 High-quality Level: In addition to planning and staff meeting time, full-time staff working year-round have a minimum of forty (40) hours of paid professional time each year. Paid professional time for part-time staff is pro-rated accordingly. Paid professional time for staff in programs operating for less than a full year is also pro-rated.	✓
			Striving Level: In addition to planning and staff meeting time, full-time staff working year-round have a minimum of twenty-five (25) hours of paid professional time each year. Paid professional time for part-time staff is pro-rated accordingly. Paid professional time for staff in programs operating for less than a full year is also pro-rated.	
			9.8 Program staff can use professional time for individualized and state mandated in-service training, attendance in college classes, observation of other school-age programs, and/or release time for activities related to child care advocacy.	
			9.9 Increases in education are rewarded with increases in compensation.	✓
			9.10 The program provides accessible and affordable professional development opportunities both on-site and within the community. No more than half of the state required training hours can be on-site or provided by the sponsoring agency exclusively for staff employed by the agency because of the importance of collaboration and community-building among school-age care professionals.	

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 9: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**	ESSENTIAL
			9.11 High-quality Level: Each staff member who works 15 hours or more per week is allocated at least $150/year for professional development expenses after a 9-month tenure in the program.	
			Striving Level: Each staff member working 15 hours or more per week is allocated at least $100/year for professional development expenses after a 9-month tenure in the program.	
			9.12 Program staff are provided encouragement and support to share their professional development experiences by conducting in-service training for co-workers.	
			9.13 Opportunities to be mentors or to be mentored are available. Appropriate training and compensation are available for staff serving as mentors.	
			9.14 Information about educational funding is available to staff who wish to pursue school-age credentials or college degrees in fields related to school-age care.	
			9.15 Substantial effort is made to create educational funds if they are not currently available in the community.	
			9.16 Information is available to staff regarding opportunities for professional support outside of the program, e.g. support groups, professional associations, informal networks, and advocacy groups.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 16.

NOTES ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 10: PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT**	ESSENTIAL
			10.1 Professional support is available to the staff (either on-site, within the multi-site agency, or in the community), including but not limited to: office manager, health care and mental health professional, social worker, psychologist, nutritionist, cook, bus/van driver, and maintenance worker, as appropriate for individual programs.	
			10.2 The program consistently maintains sufficient staff for manageable group sizes –with consideration given to ages of children and children with special needs–and adult/child ratios that promote positive relationships between children and staff.	✓
			10.3 Trained substitutes or floaters are available and arranged by the program administration for all staff leave time, including sick, vacation, personal and professional leave.	✓
			10.4 The program is adequately equipped to meet the developmental needs of all the children in the program.	
			10.5 Staff has access to petty cash funds for immediate consumable supplies, and a system is in place for requesting funds when needs are apparent.	
			10.6 Staff has input on how the program's operating budget for supplies and equipment is expended.	
			10.7 Professional development plans, as well as recruitment and promotion practices, ensure that peer support is available to all staff from entry level to those with more education and experience.	
			10.8 Professional support is available for working with parents, and for working with families or children who have special needs.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 8.

NOTES ON PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 11: DIVERSITY**	ESSENTIAL
			11.1 All staff participate in ongoing anti-bias/anti-racist training as part of in-service and professional development activity, with a focus on working with adults as well as children.	✓
			11.2 The program honors, respects, and affirms all staff members. Fulfillment of this goal is evaluated regularly with staff input.	✓
			11.3 Program recruitment, retention and promotion policies and practices reflect a commitment to staff diversity.	✓
			11.4 Employees are not discriminated against based on race, color, age, religion, sex, handicap, marital status, political persuasion, national origin or ancestry, physical appearance, income level or source of income, student status, sexual preference, union activity or criminal record except as required by licensing regulations.	✓
			11.5 Reasonable accommodations are made for staff with special needs as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).	✓

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 5.

NOTES ON DIVERSITY:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 12: HEALTH & SAFETY**	ESSENTIAL
			12.1 The program accepts responsibility for providing a safe and healthy working environment for employees.	✓
			12.2 Personal protective equipment or clothing, e.g. disposable gloves, are available without cost to the employee.	
			12.3 Staff receive annual training on safe methods for handling objects and children, and on healthy program practices.	
			12.4 Staff receive annual training on the management of infectious diseases.	
			12.5 Staff receive annual training on security procedures and systems, and procedures for dealing with violent behavior.	
			12.6 Regularly used equipment and storage areas are designed on ergonomic principles and are at a height and location that allow staff to use gestures and postures that are safe.	✓
			12.7 Accommodations are made to facilitate moving equipment and supplies that must be moved on a regular basis, e.g. purchasing lightweight furniture and equipment whenever possible, having shelving and space dividers on smoothly operating casters, conveniently locating storage areas, etc.	✓
			12.8 Adult-sized chairs, sinks, toilets and workstations are available.	✓
			12.9 Clear policies that delineate the conditions under which children are excluded from the program because of illness or injury are consistently implemented.	
			12.10 Copies of reports resulting from inspection of the workplace by building, health, safety or licensing officials are posted.	✓
			12.11 No retaliatory action is taken against employees who refuse to perform work that is in violation of regulations, after notifying the employer of the violation.	✓

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 12: HEALTH & SAFETY**	ESSENTIAL
			12.12 Security measures, as identified with input from all staff, are in place to ensure staff members' physical well-being. Examples include: alarms, lighting, or other security systems; emergency back-up plans; double staffing at the ends of the day; cell phones or walkie-talkies to facilitate communication between spaces within the physical environment, etc.	
			12.13 Policies are in place to assure a work environment that is free of sexual harassment.	
			12.14 In addition to provision of breaks, the program offers in-service training for staff on stress management and other issues relative to emotional and mental well-being.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 14.

NOTES ON HEALTH & SAFETY:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 13: PHYSICAL SETTING**	ESSENTIAL
			13.1 There is adequate indoor space designed with the developmental needs of school-age children in mind. Staff have input into how the space is arranged and used, and are provided resources, training and support to improve the physical setting whenever possible. Where school-age care space is "shared space," staff are encouraged to offer their creativity and suggestions to improve the space for program usage.	✓
			13.2 Within the indoor and outdoor physical setting, there are comfortable places for adults to sit and be with school-age children.	✓
			13.3 Staff are encouraged to add artifacts, photographs, and other objects that reflect their lives as well as the lives of the children.	
			13.4 A staff room or designated area is available which allows for staff interaction, and a relatively quiet place for reflection and breaks.	
			13.5 Staff have a safe place to put personal belongings and a work area for preparation and planning.	✓
			13.6 The staff room or designated area is fully equipped with supplies needed for adult work, comfortable adult furnishings, and access to technology, e.g. computers, fax and e-mail, if available within the program.	
			13.7 There is a professional library where staff can obtain books, journals and brochures, and view or check out videotapes, dealing with school-age care issues.	
			13.8 Both indoor and outdoor environments are periodically evaluated for the health and safety needs of employees; improvements are planned in response to staff needs.	✓
			13.9 There is paid staff time within the daily schedule to set up the program space and to clean up after the day's activities.	✓

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

CONSISTENTLY MET	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/HIGH PRIORITY	PARTIALLY MET OR UNMET/LOW PRIORITY	Model Work Standards For Program Staff in School-Age Care **PART 13: PHYSICAL SETTING**	ESSENTIAL
			13.10 Overall maintenance of the facility is the responsibility of persons other than school-age program staff.	
			13.11 In shared space situations, there is a cooperative relationship and system of communication with the host program, sponsoring agency and/or others who use the space in order to address program needs and concerns regarding the physical setting. When the program has to vacate the usual program space for any reason, adequate advance notice is given to staff.	

NUMBER OF STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY MET: _____ OUT OF 11.

NOTES ON PHYSICAL SETTING:

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

Appendices

Using the Model Work Standards: A Note for SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM STAFF

Most people working with children and youth work for wages and benefits that do not reflect the value of their work. But how often have we heard it said, "We do it for the kids," as an excuse for accepting the work environment as it is? In fact, current research and best practices in our field tell us that improving the work environment improves the services we have to offer. Providing school-age staff with what they need to build long-term, consistent relationships with youth is "doing it for the kids." Improving working conditions, gaining skills through education, and earning a living wage that enables one to stay in the field are all "doing it for the kids." Asking for what you need and working in cooperation with other adults may not come easy, but undertaking the challenge is worth it.

GETTING STARTED:

Many program directors and administrators of school-age programs will support these standards and will be equally involved and vested in improving the work environment. In presentation of these standards to your director for the first time, be open to concerns and questions, and be prepared to learn from her business experience. But remember, too, that you have the right to expect that she will learn from your experiences in the program as well. Implementation of the Model Work Standards is likely to realize the greatest success when program staff, directors/administrators, parents, the board of directors, the host or sponsoring agency (the school or a community-based organization), and the neighborhood all work together.

But what if the director or the administrator does not support the Model Work Standards, or working together to achieve them? In that case, you can still gather with co-workers in off-hours, and give each other permission to imagine what the workplace should and could be like. Then you can:

- Assess your current work environment, using the standards.
- Prioritize the changes you would most like to see, based on your everyday experiences.
- As a group, select one to three standards that you all agree are important goals for your program to work toward first. A unified voice is much more powerful than a solitary one!
- Practice articulating to others why these changes are important. How will they help you, the administration, the parents and the youth you serve? How will they improve the quality of the program that the you provide?
- Decide on a plan to communicate with the director or administration about the change(s) you want and why.
- Listen respectfully to the response, even if it differs from your own.
- Offer to work cooperatively to find solutions or compromises.

Finally, remember that you can seek allies in the community, in other school-age programs, and within the Worthy Wage Network of CCW whenever you need outside support to make progress.

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

Using the Model Work Standards: A Note for DIRECTORS/ ADMINISTRATORS OF SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAMS

As the director or administrator of a youth program, you did not create the problems of low wages, inadequate benefits and high turnover in the field, and they are not your problems to solve alone. But you do have a leadership role in helping to recruit and retain an excellent program staff, and the Model Work Standards can assist you in accomplishing that. You hold fast to a vision of a high-quality program, and you engage others in creating and realizing that vision, one step at a time. These Model Work Standards can help you:

- Prioritize use of your limited resources where they will have the greatest impact on staff retention.
- Focus arguments for increased public and private support for quality youth programs in your community.
- Learn from the staff in your program about what would make the greatest difference to them in their work lives.
- Educate the staff about the economic realities of operating the program–that is, where the money comes from and how it is currently spent.
- Improve program quality by improving jobs, and
- Acknowledge the positive working conditions your center does have, and to measure the progress you've made.

There are also some ways in which using these standards could be difficult. You will sometimes be caught between a rock and a hard place–receiving demands or requests from staff that you feel you cannot meet, even if you would like to. The staff may also have ideas or priorities that are different from your own, and you may be asked to share some of your decision-making power.

The following are ways that you can help your program get started using the Model Work Standards:

- Begin with a staff development session devoted exclusively to this topic. Establish the ground rules for working together and then really listen to staff concerns, suspending both your judgments and your defense of current practices.
- As you work through the six steps described in the Introduction–assessing the workplace, prioritizing, estimating costs, making an action plan, documenting progress, and celebrating success–use small work groups, opportunities for individual reflection, and delegating tasks to keep everyone involved. Make documenting progress an on-going agenda item at staff meetings.
- If you are part of a larger network of youth program providers, find support within your network. What have others done? How did they do it? What can you work on together?

VALUABLE RESOURCES:

Paula Jorde Bloom. (2000). *Circle of Influence: Implementing Shared Decision Making and Participative Management.* New Horizons, Educational Consultants and Learning Resources: Lake Forest, IL.

Margie Carter and Deb Curtis. (1998). *The Visionary Director: A Handbook for Dreaming, Organizing, & Improvising in Your Center.* Redleaf Press: St. Paul, MN.

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

Using the Model Work Standards: A Note for PARENTS and BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Creating a high-quality work environment for those who are responsible for providing a high-quality caring and learning environment for the youth, is a costly process. It is more expensive than many parents can afford, and it is a cost that parents should not have to shoulder alone. But like you, the program staff believe that every child deserves the best. The best means staff who provide loving, long-lasting and stable relationships with the youth, and people who understand youth development and have the skills that promote it.

The staff in your school-age programs are most likely to stay and build their careers in school-age care, or at least give it their best while they are employed, if they have a good working environment and earnings that support themselves and their families. Currently, however, roughly one-third of the child care workforce leaves the job every year, due largely to low wages. As a result of high turnover in the field, the quality of care that youth receive suffers tremendously. Program disruption caused by turnover is costly, both in terms of financial resources and in loss of relationship-building potential between youth and staff.

When you work with your child's school-age program to create better jobs for the staff, you gain a deeper understanding of the value of the services they offer. Alliances with other advocates to secure the public and private resources needed for all sectors of the child care workforce is an excellent way to strengthen the partnership that is working in the best interests of your child. Here are some ways you can help:

- Provide feedback and input into the Model Work Standards "Action Plan" presented to you by your school-age care program.
- Agree to serve on a committee, participate in fundraising efforts, or respond to other requests for involvement.
- Consider your own workplace and/or community groups you are involved in. Do you have access to any resources that could be useful in improving school-age care jobs?
- Talk to your employer about school-age care issues and what your workplace could offer.
- Advocate for increased public investment in the child care workforce.

Using the Model Work Standards: A Note for SCHOOLS

There are several benefits to schools who advocate for, support, and work with school-age programs to improve the work environment by implementing these Model Work Standards:

- Schools who can assure parents of a high-quality before- and after-school care program, staffed by well trained and consistent staff will be more attractive to families choosing schools for their children.
- Successful partnerships between the school-age care providers and the school can improve school/parent communication. Remember, after-school care program staff see parents or guardians each day as they pick up or drop off their children. They can be a valuable link in a communication network.
- Well paid and educated school-age program staff can work with classroom teachers to develop complimentary or supportive after school programming to maximize the opportunities for children's success academically, socially and emotionally.

For these reasons, talk with the school-age care providers about the Model Work Standards, work together to identify barriers

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

and challenges to addressing them, and look for ways to share resources to better leverage support for programs that serve your families and children in out-of-school time.

A Note on the "Essential" Model Work Standards

Standards identified with a check mark in the right hand column are considered essential for a school-age program to meet in order to be recognized as a program offering a good adult work environment.

Researchers have consistently identified adequate compensation–including both wages and benefits–as the most direct and efficient method of attracting and retaining well-trained staff. Leading studies of U.S. child care programs show that compensation is a key predictor of child care program quality. Other key predictors are low staff turnover and high levels of staff education and training (Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study Team, 1995; Kontos, Howes, Shinn and Galinsky, 1995; Whitebook, Howes and Phillips, 1990). This is not to say that any of these alone will ensure a high-quality program, but rather that they are integral, necessary components of a high-quality program. Investing in program staff through adequate wages and benefits has been identified as an essential step toward achieving and maintaining quality youth services.

We have therefore emphasized as essential those elements of the Model Work Standards that most directly promote better staff compensation and a better reward system for those who receive job-related training and education. Both of these elements, in turn, are linked to low staff turnover and high levels of continuity and stability for youth and adults. We also have included items in each category that were repeatedly considered essential by those who advised us in developing the standards. These are policies that particularly promote strong working relationships, job satisfaction, and staff retention by fostering an atmosphere of clear communication, fairness, collaboration, and respect in all aspects of a program's operation.

The staff of your program will develop its own priorities in ways that may be very different from those in other programs and communities. Yet we believe that the entire profession will benefit from sharing common ground: a basic set of guidelines that are considered indispensable starting points for defining a good work environment. We welcome your feedback and your suggestions.

REFERENCES

Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study Team (1995). Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers. Public Report. Second edition. Denver, CO: Economics Department, University of Colorado.

Kontos, S., Howes, C., Shinn, M., and Galinsky, E. (1995). Quality in Family Child Care and Relative Care. New York: Teachers College Press.

Whitebook, M., Howes, C., and Phillips, D.A. (1990). Who Cares? Child care teachers and the quality of care in America. Final report of the National Child Care Staffing Study. Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce (formerly the Child Care Employee Project).

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

Calculating a Self-Sufficiency or Living Wage for Your Community

The Model Work Standards indicate that the entry-level point on a program's salary scale should be a locally-determined "self-sufficiency wage" or "living wage." Determination of these figures locally is important, since, due to wide variations in the cost of living among different parts of each state and the country as a whole, it is not possible or appropriate to recommend a single set of salary levels that would fit every community. But what do the terms "self-sufficiency wage" and "living wage" mean, and how can they be calculated?

There are several ways that communities have determined what is an adequate wage for someone to earn in their area so as to get by without relying on any form of public or private assistance. This is then used as a rock-bottom, minimum figure in a variety of advocacy efforts. When it was first developed, the federal minimum wage served this function of reflecting a decent subsistence level for a working American, but the minimum wage has long stopped keeping pace with inflation, and is now well below what is needed to stay economically afloat anywhere in the country.

Some communities have established Living Wage Campaigns which agree on a certain figure through a local consensus-building process, calculating the costs of various basic goods and services. The figure could be defined as a dollar amount or as a percentage of the federal poverty level. In one community, for example, the 'living wage' has been set by advocates at 110% of the poverty level for a family of four; in another, it has been set at $7.00 per hour if benefits are included, and $8.50 per hour if they are not.

Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), an anti-poverty project based in Washington, D.C., uses the term 'self-sufficiency wage.' They have prepared county-by-county calculations in several states and the District of Columbia of a "Self-Sufficiency Standard:" the hourly wage a worker (with a variety of different family configurations) needs to earn in order to be economically self-sufficient. To reach these figures, WOW measured the average basic costs in each county of housing, public transportation, food, licensed child care, one-third of health care expenses, and taxes. The figures assume that the worker is able to obtain all of these in the regular marketplace without outside assistance–i.e., without any use of public housing, welfare payments, child care subsidy, food banks, etc.

While it should not be difficult to argue that an entry-level worker in the child care field should earn such a self-sufficiency wage, the fact remains that many do not. It has been estimated that as much as half of the child care workforce earn an income at or below the poverty level, and as many as a third earn the minimum wage. Calculation of a more reasonable minimum level for your community is an important step to take–and it can become a very powerful tool for organizing, advocacy, and education.

Family size is also an important variable. Setting a standard that is appropriate only for a single adult has serious pitfalls. It perpetuates the idea that only single and generally young people can afford to work in child care, or that a school-age care provider must have a partner or spouse who earns a better income and can take on a disproportionate share of a family's economic responsibilities. Instead, calculation of a self-sufficiency wage for a family of 3 or 4 members would come closer to reflecting reality: namely, that many in the child care industry are working to support their families.

While it takes more work to engage in a community process of deciding on a living wage or a self-sufficiency wage figure, rather

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

than using a standard, one-size-fits-all number, it is really the only way to measure what a decent, minimum level of earnings should be where you live.

For more information on Living Wage Campaigns, contact the Public Policy Department, AFL-CIO, (202) 637-5177.

Wider Opportunities for Women has completed or is working on Self-Sufficiency Standards for California, District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland (Montgomery and Prince George's Counties), Massachusetts, New York City, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Wisconsin, and Virginia (City of Alexandria, and Arlington and Fairfax Counties). To learn more about the Standard or to develop one for your county or state, send a letter of inquiry to "Self-Sufficiency Standard" at: WOW, 815 15th Street, N.W., Suite 916, Washington, DC 20005; fax: (202) 638-4885; e-mail: *info@w-o-w.org*.

Other Measures of Program Quality

Throughout the country, communities and organizations are developing local standards for assessing the quality of school-age programs. The work of building a consensus around quality standards can also bring people together to improve school-age care jobs and to build a collective voice for improved public policy that addresses the needs of the school-age field.

There is also a national effort to promote quality standards in school-age programs: NSACA Accreditation. This system of accreditation for school-age programs has been developed through a collaboration between the National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA), and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST, formerly the SACC Project). NSACA is a representative professional membership organization, and NIOST is an action-oriented research group. NSACA now manages the implementation of the national accreditation system, and NIOST continues to share expertise in an advisory capacity, providing training and technical assistance to participating programs.

Similar to other national accreditation systems in the child care industry, this system is based on a method of self-study and program improvement based on the NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care. The accreditation standards help programs assess important aspects of program quality in the areas of: human relationships; indoor environment; outdoor environment; activities; health, safety and nutrition; and administration.

These Model Work Standards for staff of school-age care programs are meant to complement all on-going efforts to improve program quality, including accreditation. They complete the picture of a high-quality program. While accreditation and other measures of program quality focus primarily on the needs of youth, Model Work Standards focus on the needs of the adults to sustain themselves in this work so they can give their best to the youth and families they serve.

For more information on NSACA Accreditation, contact:

The National School-Age Care Alliance
1137 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02124
Tel: (617) 298-5012
Fax: (617) 298-5022
E-mail: staff@nsaca.org
Web: www.nsaca.org

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

Make a copy of this work sheet for each standard you address.

Model Work Standards
An Action Plan Work Sheet

The standard we are working to improve:

_____
_____
_____

What we have now:

_____
_____
_____

Our goal:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Note: The goal may be to meet the standard fully at either the high-quality or striving level, or may simply be a step in the direction of meeting the standard.

Estimated cost, if any: _____

While some standards may require minimal or no additional resources, others may take significant financial investment. In the latter case, appropriate steps will include funding strategies. The actual cost should be calculated in your evaluation.

Outline for your Action Plan. See the other side of this work sheet.

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

Action Plan

Below, or on a separate sheet of paper, respond to the following:

I. **What needs to be done?** List the specific steps needed to meet the goal.

II. **When?** Create a timeline including the end point (when you hope to achieve the goal) and action steps along the way.

III. **Who?** Determine who will be responsible for each specific action step. In addition to staff, identify parents and members of the community who could be helpful in reaching your goal and how and when they will be contacted.

IV. **Progress/Notes**. This action plan is likely to change or need to be re-evaluated along the way, as new opportunities and new barriers present themselves. Be open and flexible, but keep sight of the goal. Check on your progress frequently and report at staff meetings, through the staff bulletin board, etc. Keep a journal or notes for future reference, and to offer help or advice to programs who follow in your footsteps.

V. **Evaluation**: Engage all the collaborators in answering the following questions:

Did we succeed in reaching our goal?

If yes, how will we celebrate and broadcast the news?

If no, what barriers still confront us?

What did we learn?

What was the actual time and cost involved?

How do we feel about our process? How could we improve it?

What next?

© 2001 Center for the Child Care Workforce

Copyright Reminder

The publication you have purchased is copyrighted by the Center for the Child Care Workforce. Because we recommend that all staff members have their own copy of the Model Work Standards, CCW has established a special bulk discount for 5 or more copies of this publication. Please call our office for details at 1-800-U-R-WORTHY or (202) 737-7700.

- **an educational tool** for articulating what school-age care providers need in order to have a high-quality work environment,
- **an assessment tool** for evaluating how a school-age care program measures up to providing a high-quality workplace,
- **a planning tool** for setting goals and measuring success, and
- **an organizing tool** for enlisting the wider community–parents, professional associations, support agencies, business, labor, government, law enforcement and the school-age care profession–in advocating for the resources youth programs need to make lasting, comprehensive improvements in the nation's school-age care system.